

(Washington D.C.) - In response to President Bush's announcement today regarding the commutation of I. Lewis Libby Jr.'s prison sentence, Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA), Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security issued the following statement:

"Respect for the rule of law and equal treatment under law form the foundation of our legal system. For several weeks, we have been trying to get to the bottom of whether the Administration is playing politics with the rule of law in the dismissals and appointments of United States Attorneys, given all the shenanigans that have been uncovered. The Libby commutation raises the same question of the President's respect for the rule of law.

"It is significant that the President did not pardon Libby. Clearly, he acknowledges that Libby broke the law. He says he commuted Libby's sentence because it was 'too harsh.' However, Libby received exactly what all others receive under the sentencing guidelines for committing the same crime. If the President wants judges to have discretion in sentencing, to assure that the punishment fits the crime in each case, that discretion should be available for all defendants and not just for the President's friends."

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